Higher Learning Commission
A commission of the North Central Association

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March 7, 2014

Vicky R. Smith
President
McHenry County College
8900 US Hwy. 14
Crystal Lake, IL 60012-2761

Dear President Smith:

Enclosed is a copy of McHenry County College's *Systems Appraisal Feedback Report*. It begins with a concise Executive Summary, intended for those general readers that do not require a high level of detail. Your Systems Appraisal Team provided extensive detail in the full report by identifying nine distinct groups of what they view as your institution's *strengths* and *opportunities for improvement*, one group for each of the nine AQIP Categories. We are also emailing your institution's Accreditation Liaison a copy of this report.

To receive maximum benefit from your Systems Appraisal, you and your colleagues should plan to invest substantial time in discussing it, considering the team's observations and advice, and identifying which actions will best advance your institution.

We ask that you formally acknowledge receipt of this report within the next two weeks, and provide us with any comments you wish to make about it. Your response will become part of your institution's permanent HLC file. Please email your response to AQIP@hlcommission.org.
Sincerely,

Mary L. Green
AQIP Process Administrator

Systems Appraisal Feedback Report

in response to the *Systems Portfolio* of

MCHENRY COMMUNITY COLLEGE

March 3, 2014

for

The Higher Learning Commission
A commission of the North Central Association

Contents

Elements Of McHenry Community College's Feedback Report

Welcome to the *Systems Appraisal Feedback Report*. This report provides AQIP's official response to an institution's *Systems Portfolio* by a team of peer reviewers (the Systems Appraisal Team). After the team independently reviews the institution's portfolio, it reaches consensus on essential elements of the institutional profile, strengths and opportunities for improvement by AQIP Category, and any significant issues related to accreditation. These are then presented in three sections of the *Systems Appraisal Feedback Report*: "Strategic Challenges Analysis," "AQIP Category Feedback," and "Accreditation Issues Analysis." These components are interrelated in defining context, evaluating institutional performance, surfacing critical issues or accreditation concerns, and assessing institutional performance. Ahead of these three areas, the team provides a "Reflective Introduction" followed closely by an "Executive Summary." The appraisal concludes with commentary on the overall quality of the report and advice on using the report. Each of these areas is overviewed below.

It is important to remember that the Systems Appraisal Team has only the institution's *Systems Portfolio* to guide its analysis of the institution's strengths and opportunities for improvement. Consequently, the team's report may omit important strengths, particularly if discussion or documentation of these areas in the *Systems Portfolio* were presented minimally. Similarly, the team may point out areas of potential improvement that are already receiving widespread institutional attention. Indeed, it is possible that some areas recommended for potential improvement have since become strengths rather than opportunities through the institution's ongoing efforts. Recall that the overarching goal of the Systems Appraisal Team is to provide an institution with the best possible advice for ongoing improvement.

The various sections of the *Systems Appraisal Feedback Report* can be described as follows:

Reflective Introduction & Executive Summary: In this first section of the *System's Appraisal Feedback Report*, the team provides a summative statement that reflects its broad understanding of the institution and the constituents served (Reflective Introduction), and also the team's overall judgment regarding the institution's current performance in relation to the nine AQIP Categories (Executive Summary). In the Executive Summary, the team considers such factors as: robustness of process design; utilization or deployment of processes; the existence of results, trends, and comparative data; the use of results data as feedback; and systematic processes for improvement of the activities that each AQIP Category covers. Since institutions are complex, maturity levels may vary from one Category to another.

Strategic Challenges Analysis: Strategic challenges are those most closely related to an institution's ability to succeed in reaching its mission, planning, and quality improvement goals. Teams formulate judgments related to strategic challenges and accreditation issues (discussed below) through careful analysis of the Organizational Overview included in the institution's Systems Portfolio and through the team's own feedback provided for each AQIP Category. These collected findings offer a framework for future improvement of processes and systems.

AQIP Category Feedback: The *Systems Appraisal Feedback Report* addresses each AQIP Category by identifying and coding strengths and opportunities for improvement. An **S** or **SS** identifies strengths, with the double letter signifying important achievements or capabilities upon which to build. Opportunities are designated by **O**, with **OO** indicating areas where attention may result in more significant improvement. Through comments, which are keyed to the institution's Systems Portfolio, the team offers brief analysis of each strength and opportunity. Organized by AQIP Category, and presenting the team's findings in detail, this section is often considered the heart of the *Feedback Report*.

Accreditation Issues Analysis: Accreditation issues are areas where an institution may have not yet provided sufficient evidence that it meets the Commission's Criteria for Accreditation. It is also possible that the evidence provided suggests to the team that the institution may have difficulties, whether at present or in the future, in satisfying the *Criteria*. As with strategic challenges, teams formulate judgments related to accreditation issues through close analysis of the entire Systems Portfolio, with particular attention given to the evidence that the institution provides for satisfying the various core components of the *Criteria*. For purposes of consistency, AQIP instructs appraisal teams to identify any accreditation issue as a strategic challenge as well.

Quality of Report & Its Use: As with any institutional report, the *Systems Portfolio* should work to enhance the integrity and credibility of the institution by celebrating successes while also stating honestly those opportunities for improvement. The *Systems Portfolio* should therefore be transformational, and it should provide external peer reviewers insight as to how such transformation may occur through processes of continuous improvement. The AQIP Categories and the Criteria for Accreditation serve as the overarching measures for the institution's current state, as well as its proposed future state. As such, it is imperative that the *Portfolio* be fully developed, that it adhere to the prescribed format, and that it be thoroughly vetted for clarity and correctness. Though decisions about specific actions rest

with each institution following this review, AQIP expects every institution to use its feedback to stimulate cycles of continual improvement and to inform future AQIP processes.

Reflective Introduction and Executive Summary For McHenry Community College

The following consensus statement is from the System Appraisal Team's review of the institution's *Systems Portfolio Overview* and its introductions to the nine AQIP Categories. The purpose of this reflective introduction is to highlight the team's broad understanding of the institution, its mission, and the constituents that it serves.

McHenry Community College (MCC) is a community college located in Northwest Illinois, whose mission is focused on learning, with student success being the ultimate goal. The main campus is located in Crystal Lake, IL, with a variety of local satellite campuses. 77 % of MCC's coverage area is considered rural, with the remainder being urban. MCC offers seven Associate degrees, and over 50 certificate options. MCC also offers community based programs, including working with the K-12 systems and the local court systems. MCC recently went through a yearlong branding process, which helped identify their new mission, vision and values. TCC's mission, "Our focus is Learning, Student Success is our Goal." The MCC's vision is to be the community's first choice for a lifetime of learning. Its mission, vision, and values are tied too and directly reflected in its strategic planning process. Through MCC's own processes, they have identified what they feel are its strengths along with an identification of perceived opportunities. They have used the 2009 portfolio feedback to create action projects to address opportunities identified. These include leadership initiatives/changes, as well as initiatives tied to academic improvement and support services. MCC notes a continued challenge includes the implementation of measures for evaluation that was also a noted strategic challenge in the previous Systems Appraisal Feedback report.

The following are summary comments on each of the AQIP Categories crafted by the Appraisal Team to highlight **McHenry Community College's** achievements and to identify challenges yet to be met.

- McHenry College appears to be making moderate progress in the development and implementation of processes that help students learn. They have developed initiatives for specific areas; the next recommended steps are the full deployment of these processes. While MCC has numerous and appropriate activities and strategies designed to support student learning, these processes are not linked in a systematic and mature method that uses data and information to inform process design and improvement.

Careful consideration of results and what they mean for MCC's students and their learning can lead to improvements in both measures and their analysis that can benefit MCC's quality journey.

- The Workforce and Community Development Division of McHenry Community College demonstrates an overall understanding of its role in serving the community at large. But MCC has made little progress towards accomplishing distinct objectives especially in the area of systematic processes that employ data and information to inform objective decisions and measures of performance. A comprehensive approach for determining, deploying and evaluating processes is not evident, and succinct measures of performance, including desired targets, trends, and comparatives are not evident. Without clear objectives and aligned measures, it could be difficult for the institution to evaluate effectiveness of its processes in achieving its objectives and identifying opportunities for improvement.

- MCC presents appropriate and meaningful results from surveys that support results for student satisfaction, building relationships, stakeholder satisfaction, and comparison with other higher education institutions. MCC is emerging in maturity relative to Understanding Students' and Other Stakeholders' needs, but there is still a gap in linking performance with the design and development of intentional strategies. Many processes still appear to be in the reactive stage, which was an opportunity noted in the last Systems Appraisal Feedback Report. Aligning data and information to decision making in a more systematic method will greatly enhance MCC's ability to demonstrate a focus on quality in a proactive manner.

- MCC has sound processes in place for hiring faculty and staff. MCC has made some improvements in valuing people through professional development, an updated evaluation process, and AQIP teams focusing on job and compensation analysis. MCC also utilizes the Personal Assessment of the College Environment (PACE) survey to monitor institutional climate and identify areas for improvement. While these efforts are indications that MCC is progressing from reacting to systematic, it appears that the linkage of using data and information to design and determine improvements in process is still emerging. By striving for better coordination between these activities, MCC can align and integrate systems that demonstrate how well it is Valuing People.

- MCC is in the early stages of developing processes that can generate performance information and effectively use that information in decision-making. MCC's leading and

communicating approach employs teams, along with planning and operational improvements, but it is unclear to what extent broad stakeholder engagement is encouraged beyond AQIP teams. MCC has yet to develop the type of measures that discern comparative or longitudinal improvement that can be used in benchmarking or target setting. MCC appears to be responding to immediate needs rather than establishing systematic and aligned processes intended to infuse data-based decision-making throughout the institution. There exists a significant opportunity for MCC to mature in its ability to link data and information to processes that systematically use the data and information to guide decisions.

- MCC has made many improvements in processes for student and administrative support services, and continues to mature in its ability to implement improvements. Some improvements appear to be reactive, rather than part of an overall systematic process. For example, the studies conducted at the direction of the Board indicates that MCC is not regularly and systematically evaluating performance results and data to inform improvements, but instead doing so when directed by the Board. There still exists an opportunity to identify key measures of performance and linking data and information, including performance results, to process design and improvement. Without clearly defined key measure of performance at the institutional level, MCC may continue to struggle with demonstrating a commitment to continuous quality improvement as a method of operating. Establishing a regular systematic method to review and evaluate key measures such as PACE, CCSSE, and Noel-Levitz results relative to support processes to inform improvements and actions will enable MCC to demonstrate its operations as being truly focused on the principles of AQIP and continuous quality improvement.

- MCC has an opportunity to use meta-analysis to distinguish between processes that measure the results of improvement and actual improvement processes. The institution has made minimal progress in its maturity relative to its processes for measuring effectiveness. There appears to be few processes in place to addresses how MCC determines, implements, and measures processes of data collection and performance. Data presented appears to reflect results of other categories, but no indication is made that they collect and analyze data pertaining to how their data systems work and how needs are determined. There is a significant opportunity for the institution to identify key measures of performance and link those measures to processes and improvements.

- MCC has made some progress in maturity relative to planning for continuous improvement through the development of the strategic and other master plans. However, a significant opportunity still exists to identify key measures of institutional performance to enable MCC to gain an understanding of how the plans are impacting institutional performance in relation to desired targets and for comparison.

- MCC is emerging in it maturity in building collaborative relationships in that there are many identifiable and intentional activities deployed to engage and support relationship building such as the use of AQIP teams to encourage collaboration. However, a clear linkages to how the institution creates and prioritizes relationships and measures the effectiveness of such relationships lacks maturity. MCC may benefit from establishing key performance measures for building collaborative relationships to inform creating and prioritizing activities and to measure how well the activities are accomplishing the desired results or if improvements are needed.

Note: Strategic challenges and accreditation issues are discussed in detail in subsequent sections of the *Systems Appraisal Feedback Report*.

Strategic Challenges For McHenry Community College

In conducting the Systems Appraisal, the Systems Appraisal Team attempted to identify the broader issues that would seem to present the greatest challenges and opportunities for the institution in the coming years. These areas are ones that the institution should address as it seeks to become the institution it wants to be. From these the institution may discover its immediate priorities, as well as strategies for long-term performance improvement. These items may also serve as the basis for future activities and projects that satisfy other AQIP requirements. The team also considered whether any of these challenges put the institution at risk of not meeting the Commission's Criteria for Accreditation. That portion of the team's work is presented later in this report.

Knowing that **McHenry Community College** will discuss these strategic challenges, give priority to those it concludes are most critical, and take action promptly, the Systems Appraisal Team identified the following:

> **Responding proactively**. A strategic issue identified in the 2010 Systems Appraisal Feedback Report, MCC remains responsive when ideas are brought forward such as by staff, the faculty, and the community, but in a number of categories does not have

systematic processes in place to proactively identify needs and address opportunities. Being more proactive may allow MCC to be more innovative and make greater progress towards realizing its vision. *MCC appears to have made little progress on this strategic issue.*

Aligning results to key objectives, setting performance targets, and systematic analyses. The 2010 Systems Appraisal Feedback Report identified significant opportunities for MCC to develop more comprehensive metrics of *key* process performance including both effectiveness and efficiency metrics that provide leading information and do not rely solely on lagging perceptual data. The Appraisal recommended that the College concentrate on more *systematic* analyses of data at all levels (institutional, program, and course) and align items such as budget with this data analysis. Throughout the portfolio, MCC identifies activities and results that are disconnected and unaligned. *MCC appears to have made little progress on this strategic issue.*

Effective use of comparison data. The 2010 Appraisal further suggested that MCC's evaluation processes can be enhanced with additional external comparative data sources to ensure that continuous improvement is not strictly inward looking and takes advantage of the success of other organizations with similar processes. These issues remain. MCC is providing some comparison data derived from CCSSE, Noel-Levitz SSI, and other sources, but is not aligning results with specific processes and targets to identify improvement projects. Tracking and trending performance results for accomplishing other distinctive objectives may assist the College with gaining an understanding of how well it is achieving its mission of student success.

Measuring the effectiveness of its improvement efforts – MCC is utilizing AQIP Teams to generate team-based improvement efforts and recommendations. While these teams are providing opportunity for cross-disciplinary collaboration and communication, MCC is not demonstrating that it is planning for and assessing continuous improvement. MCC's improvement efforts can benefit from assessment of the efficacy of improvement plans and processes.

Committing to AQIP principles. Based on the information put forth in the portfolio, there is an appearance of a serious lack of understanding, by the institution, of quality, continuous improvement, and the AQIP process. While some issues raised in the

portfolio are the result of writing issues, multiple issues of understanding and commitment to the AQIP process have been raised by the portfolio. The portfolio has created an appearance of not being fully committed to the processes of continuous improvement. Little evidence has been put forth to show any serious attempts have been initiated to resolve issues presented in the college's 2010 Systems Appraisal Feedback Report. Many of the opportunities and strategic issues presented in the 2010 Systems Appraisal Feedback Report remain as both opportunities and strategic issues in this current portfolio. Key issues of process creation and data understanding remain unresolved and unaddressed, with the appearance of a serious lack of understanding of how data is identified, collected, and analyzed for use in the control and improvement of processes. Most category questions have not been sufficiently answered as to indicate that the college understands the category, let alone is putting efforts in place, beyond superficial attempts, at implementing processes that lead to effective and deployable processes within each category. Based on this apparent lack of commitment to continuous improvement, it may be of benefit for the college to reassess as to whether the AQIP accrediting process is the path that should be pursued by the institution.

AQIP Category Feedback

In the following section, the Systems Appraisal Team delineates institutional strengths along with opportunities for improvement within the nine AQIP Categories. As explained above, the symbols used in this section are **SS** for outstanding strength, **S** for strength, **O** for opportunity for improvement, and **OO** for outstanding opportunity for improvement. The choice of symbol for each item represents the consensus evaluation of the team members and deserves the institution's thoughtful consideration. Comments marked **SS** or **OO** may need immediate attention, either to ensure the institution preserves and maximizes the value of its greatest strengths, or to devote immediate attention to its greatest opportunities for improvement.

AQIP Category 1: Helping Students Learn. This category identifies the shared purpose of all higher education institutions and is accordingly the pivot of any institutional analysis. It focuses on the teaching-learning process within a formal instructional context, yet it also addresses how the entire institution contributes to helping students learn and overall student development. It examines the institution's processes and systems related to learning objectives, mission-driven student learning and development, intellectual climate, academic programs and courses,

student preparation, key issues such as technology and diversity, program and course delivery, faculty and staff roles, teaching and learning effectiveness, course sequencing and scheduling, learning and co-curricular support, student assessment, measures, analysis of results, and efforts to continuously improve these areas. The Systems Appraisal Team identified various strengths and opportunities for **McHenry Community College** for Category 1.

MCC is a maturing institution that focuses on student learning. MCC's general education program requires that students demonstrate competencies in five areas: critical thinking, technology literacy, ethical awareness, and effective communication and information literacy. Some processes are more systematic and mature, such as the course development proposal process, while others are emerging such as the systematic alignment of core competencies to co-curricular activities. Methods of measuring student learning, specifically on core competencies, are emerging but still consist of internal measures that may inhibit MCC's ability to compare student performance to statewide or national peers. Identifying nationally normed methods of assessing student academic performance could enhance MCC's ability to effectively evaluate and identify areas for improvement.

1P1, S. MCC determines its common objectives through a common core of curricular and distribution requirements. All students are expected to learn and demonstrate the following five competencies: critical thinking, information literacy, effective communication, ethical awareness, and technological literacy. The review process is overseen by MCCs Curriculum Promotion and Renewal (CP&R) Committee, and involves multiple, cross-functional college members which includes faculty, staff, and administrators.

1P2, O. MCC uses a curriculum mapping rubric that allows faculty to determine program learning objectives through a shared, input driven process. However, it is not clear how program objectives are linked to overall core competencies to ensure alignment and support of common desired goals. Establishing linkages between program objectives and the institutional core competencies may assist MCC with understanding how effective program objectives are in helping achieve the core competencies.

1P3, S. MCC has developed an Educational Master Plan, which appears to assist with focusing on the development of new courses in 4 strategic areas. An environmental scan was included as part of the development of this plan.

1P4, O. While MCC speaks to use of environmental scan and other labor reports, a

process for balancing and integrating learning goals, student career needs, and the realities of the employment market is not described. MCC has an opportunity to integrate systematically data from scans and other sources with its internal development processes to ensure that learning goals meet career and market needs. This was also noted as an opportunity in the 2010 Systems Appraisal Feedback Report.

1P5, O. In 2010, an AQIP Action Team addressed Academic Competencies that MCC presents. While MCC indicates it has a process to determine how well students are prepared, it is not clear what that process is. It may be beneficial for MCC to define this process to ensure it is meeting the needs of its students.

1P6, **S**. Academic expectations are communicated by advisors and counselors, and a wide array of print and electronic media. These efforts are enhanced by the expansion of MCC's New-Student Orientation and First-Year Experience activities.

1P8, OO. While MCC offers developmental education classes for students who do not place into college-level courses, and adult basic education/secondary education/English as a second language opportunities, MCC has an opportunity to demonstrate that it is creating comprehensive support systems for underprepared students that enhance their ability to successfully transition. It is unclear, for example, how the Sage Learning Center free tutoring services are integrated with academic coursework or how diagnostics are used to assess where students have gaps or challenges that can be met through specific instructional interventions.

1P9, O. While there are many initiatives to address learning styles, and professional development opportunities. However, MCC might benefit from implementing intentional processes for helping students identify individual learning styles and then ensuring that diverse learning styles are addressed in all classes across the curricula.

1P10, O. MCC appears to have several offices that focus on addressing special needs of student subgroups, but it is unclear how the needs are addressed in a systematic and integrated manner.

1P11,S. A May 2011 AQIP action team addressing excellence in teaching identified key elements of excellence in teaching including subject matter, pedagogy, assessment and professionalism. The team identified a variety of approaches in which to enhance and assess teaching effectiveness including the importance of academic integrity.

1P12, SS. MCC has adopted Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) as a method of

building and delivering effective course delivery that addresses students' needs, especially those who are self-organized learners and those wanting to enhance academic preparedness. Integrating MOOCs into the course delivery format demonstrates a commitment to ensuring learning methods are flexible and responsive to varying student needs.

1P13-14, S. Program reviews are mandated every 5 years, which address cost/viability, fit to MCC's mission, and overall program health. Mid-cycle reviews are also done to determine if programs should be continued, discontinued, or updated.

1P15,O. MCC describes a variety of activities meant to address the learning support needs of students and faculty. However, the nature of the activities, their relationship to one another, and methods of assessment of determining needs are not described sufficiently to determine whether needs assessment is systematic, comprehensive, and used in continuous improvement efforts.

1P16, O. It is not clear that MCC has a systematic process established to ensure alignment of co-curricular goals with curricular learning objectives. Since this area was identified in the previous Systems Appraisal Feedback Report, MCC may benefit from establishing co-curricular goals that align with curricular goals and implementing an instrument to measure these goals. Measuring effectiveness of co-curricular activities may assist MCC with demonstrating achievement of student success as part of its mission.

1P18, O. While MCC uses various methods to determine if students have met learning outcomes, it is not clear to the extent that these measures actually measure attainment of learning outcomes. The evidence presented appears to be more anecdotal and it may benefit MCC to develop more definitive measures to ensure that learning outcomes are achieved.

1P19, OO. While MCC designs its processes for assessing student learning through the venue of MCC's Assessment team and divisional Assessment Liaisons, it is not clear that MCC has a systematic, measurable methods in place to design processes for assessing student learning. Establishing a systematic process utilizing data and performance results to measure student learning may assist MCC with demonstrating achievement of learning outcome goals.

1R1-6,O. MCC describes classroom assessment by faculty, completion and success

rates, community college benchmarking results and licensure exam pass rates and goes on to describe graduate survey results to measure student learning and development. Collected consistently, analyzed thoroughly, and linked to improvement plans, these measures can be effective. However, the use of student perceptions of their own competency – whether as students or as graduates -- with respect to general education or program goals is likely to be unreliable either to establish attainment of institutional goals or to identify specific gaps (1R2/1R4). Likewise, while overall pass rates of industry certification exams are extremely useful in establishing program efficacy, MCC may want to consider the extent to which such measures can be used to assess specific learning objectives (1R3). Comparison of course retention and success rates may be evidence of performance of processes in helping students learn but may also be attributable to other factors (1R6). MCC is utilizing data in an effort to assess institutional performance in processes for helping students learn but may want to consider what these measures are actually describing, what broader measures may be included to focus on specific objectives, and how current measures can be utilized for improvement.

1I1, S. MCC offers examples of recent improvements relative to helping students learn and offers data on improvements to suggest the nature of improvement initiatives.

1I2, O. It is unclear how recent improvements are selected for implementation in a systematic method. Using performance results to inform institutional improvements may assist MCC with becoming more systematic and comprehensive in it evaluation and assessment of Helping Students Learn processes.

AQIP Category 2: Accomplishing Other Distinctive Objectives. This category addresses the processes that contribute to the achievement of the institution's major objectives that complement student learning and fulfill other portions of its mission. Depending on the institution's character, it examines the institution's processes and systems related to identification of other distinctive objectives, alignment of other distinctive objectives, faculty and staff roles, assessment and review of objectives, measures, analysis of results, and efforts to continuously improve these areas. The Systems Appraisal Team identified various strengths and opportunities for **McHenry Community College** for Category 2.

McHenry College has identified two other distinctive objectives, those of Workforce and Community Development, and Institutional Development. The Workforce and Community

Development objective targets business and industry entities, from the businesses themselves to the employees of the business. The division includes workforce, community and business programs, continuing education, conference and facility rentals and events, and adult education. MCC's processes for accomplishing other distinctive objectives are supported by formal and informal processes and systems. The methods for determining and designing key non-instructional objectives and processes are tied to the strategic plan and educational master plan. Many of the processes lack a clear connection to each other that may inhibit MCC's ability to identify the "systematic and repeatable" steps in each process for evaluation. The process for measuring and evaluating the effectiveness of accomplishing other distinctive objectives seems less mature than the methods used in the 2009 portfolio. Establishing key measures of accomplishing other distinctive objectives using data and reports from the National Reporting Service (NRS) or expanding those used in 2009 to include comparative and trend data may assist MCC with its measurement and evaluation challenge.

2P1, O. While the Workforce and Community Development Division of MCC develops and oversees programs that enrich the community through workforce development, adult education and adult literacy programs, it is unclear what processes are used to translate stakeholder input. It is also unclear how MCC designs and operates key non-instructional processes relative to stakeholder groups. Establishing a systematic method of collecting data relative to stakeholder groups in process design and evaluation may assist MCC in selecting more effective processes relative to those that are less effective.

2P2, O. Although MCC delineates four significant non-instructional objectives guided by MCC's Master Plan and by community involvement through advisory groups, industry focus groups and survey responses, MCC has no formal process for designing processes, setting outcomes, or seeking stakeholder input. MCC may consider opportunities to review its objectives with a broad set of stakeholders on a regular basis to more effectively determine non-instructional objectives.

2P4-5, O. MCC utilizes a rotating program review process that includes performance data and external feedback. Staffing needs are determined at the program level. However it is not clear how the various processes are interconnected in a systematic way. Establishing a method to align and evaluate all non-instructional processes on a regular basis may assist MCC gain a better understanding of how these processes might support student engagement and success.

2R1-3, O. Prioritizing and establishing *key* performance measures for accomplishing

other distinctive objectives might assist MCC in gaining an understanding of how well it is achieving its mission of student success. MCC has an opportunity to present, analyze and improve its programs using results that can be compared with those from other institutions. Establishing and determining key performance measures for accomplishing its distinctive objectives may assist MCC to demonstrate its commitment to achieving these objectives.

2I1-2, O MCC has a number of ongoing initiatives, but is in the very preliminary stages of understanding how these initiatives contribute to its objectives. It does not appear that there are any processes in place that show improvements based on data analysis from Category 2. It is also unclear if the processes are systematic or comprehensive.

AQIP Category 3: Understanding Students' and Other Stakeholders' Needs. This category examines how your institution works actively to understand student and other stakeholder needs. It examines your institution's processes and systems related to student and stakeholder identification; student and stakeholder requirements; analysis of student and stakeholder needs; relationship building with students and stakeholders; complaint collection, analysis, and resolution; determining satisfaction of students and stakeholders; measures; analysis of results; and efforts to continuously improve these areas. The Systems Appraisal Team identified various strengths and opportunities for **McHenry Community College** for Category 3.

MCC provides a variety of quantitative and qualitative results to support student and stakeholder satisfaction. Comparative retention and completion data are an example of performance results, but the results reported are not tied directly to institutional improvement goals. MCC might create more systematic improvement efforts if it moves beyond retention and completion data and makes better use of the graduate and other surveys as instruments for Understanding Students' and Other Stakeholders' Needs. MCC's processes for understanding students' and other stakeholders' needs appear less mature and lack a clear alignment to each other, desired results, and overall institutional strategic plan. Some processes for building and maintaining relationships with students and stakeholders are well deployed such as the efforts to increase readiness of Hispanic students. MCC collects appropriate nationally normed data to assist with evaluating its effectiveness in understanding students and other stakeholders' needs such as the Noel-Levitz Survey of Student Satisfaction (Noel-Levitz SSI) and the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE). The use of numerous and extensively segmented results from both the Noel-Levitz SSI and CCSSE inhibits the systematic use of key results to

inform improvement opportunities. Establishing high level "key" results trended and compared with peers might be important in helping MCC mature in assessing the effectiveness of its processes. MCC's improvements lack alignment to performance results and desired outcomes.

3P1, O. It is not clear from the portfolio that MCC has a process for receiving information related to student needs or if there are processes that elicit input from the students regarding their needs. Without such processes, MCC may spend vital resources on resolving issues that are not critical to students. It may also be beneficial for MCC to develop processes that directly gather student need information, and processes for analyzing that data and using it for continuous improvement.

3P2, SS. MCC sponsors activities at many levels to maintain productive relationships with its students. Pre-orientation events conducted at high schools, outreach programs, and career path information sessions are examples. To address the growing Hispanic population in the area, MCC hosts an annual Latino Empowerment Conference and collaborates with the High School to provide opportunities for this growing cultural population. Weekly announcements in the Flush are novel ways to reach the students. Providing opportunities for a "smooth transition" for students moving from ESL or GED studies into credit programming enables MCC to build relationships with students.

3P5, O. MCC lists a number of sources of data relating to student needs. However, there is no systematic process for analysis of these sources mentioned.   Establishing a systematic process to regularly evaluate opportunities for new student and stakeholder groups may assist MCC with being proactive and responsive to the community needs as part of the vision to be the "community's first choice for a lifetime of learning."

3R1, S. MCC uses multiple instruments to gauge and analyze student satisfaction. Both nationally normed surveys (Noel-Levitz, SSI, and CCSSE), and college specific (end of course surveys) are used. The use of these types of surveys can assist MCC in gaining comprehensive knowledge on the satisfaction of the students and stakeholders of MCC as compared to peer institutions.

3R2-6, O. While MCC collects a significant amount of data and information relative to measuring student and stakeholder satisfaction and engagement, it is unclear if the performance is desired or undesirable in relation to set goals and targets. Tracking and trending all performance measures to include comparison data and desired targets, may assist MCC with gaining a deeper understanding of performance and areas for

improvement. MCC has an opportunity to establish a systematic process of review, analysis, and action planning to capitalize on the data it is gathering.

3I1, O. While new initiatives support MCC's culture for intentionally collecting and reporting data on key performance indicators, MCC might consider how these improvements were developed and what data supports their effective implementation. MCC does not address how it analyzes and uses these results to improve performance related to students and other stakeholders. The lack of connection between these improvements and the data provided are an indication that MCC is making systematic improvements, but that the improvements are not integrated into institutional processes.

3I2, O. It is not clear how MCC comprehensively and systematically uses data and information in process design to inform and select improvements. Without established targets and goals for all measures of performance, it may be difficult for the institution to effectively evaluate processes and determine needed improvements. Defining and determining optimal performance targets may assist MCC with demonstrating alignment of activities and strategies with performance results. Being able to identify that certain actions were determined because of performance at or below a desired target is an indicator of a high performing organization focused on continuous improvement and quality.

AQIP Category 4: Valuing People. This category explores the institution's commitment to the development of its employees since the efforts of all faculty, staff, and administrators are required for institutional success. It examines the institution's processes and systems related to work and job environment; workforce needs; training initiatives; job competencies and characteristics; recruitment, hiring, and retention practices; work processes and activities; training and development; personnel evaluation; recognition, reward, compensation, and benefits; motivation factors; satisfaction, health and safety, and well-being; measures; analysis of results; and efforts to continuously improve these areas. The Systems Appraisal Team identified various strengths and opportunities for **McHenry Community College** for Category 4.

MCC demonstrates that it Values People through processes that are clear and repeatable. Processes are designed to be proactive in promoting fair and equitable compensation and treatment, ethical conduct, opportunities for development and solicitation of feedback. Compensation and benefits for full-time faculty, adjunct-faculty, professional and classified staff

are collectively bargained with the Faculty Association, Adjunct Faculty Union, and Staff Council. Use of a deeper analysis of data from a broader set of sources could be used to understand how effective processes are, and to close the feedback loop to continue making improvements as MCC continues its quality journey toward alignment and integration.

4P1, S. MCC has a process to identify the specific credentials, skills and values for faculty staff and administrators utilizing both state policy and a recently completed classification and compensation analysis. MCC uses the Job Assessment Tool (JAT) to ensure systematic and consistent review of positions for credentials, skills and knowledge.

4P2, O. The hiring processes include pre-screening of applicants, face-to-face interviews, a teaching demonstration for faculty positions, a hiring recommendation from the search committee, and appropriate due diligence. However, no indication is given as to the criteria used for these processes. Data is presented for percentages of types of degrees, whether or not candidates are McHenry graduates, and their years of service. But it is not clear if these are the actual current values, or if they are the desired values, and whether they are relevant to 4P2.

4P3-4, S. McHenry uses standard recruitment resources to attract applicants, and sponsors several orientation events. Initially, a first day orientation connects new employees to the campus. The second orientation, Journey for Success, is more comprehensive and consists of presentations and meetings with key leadership of MCC. MCC asserts that retention is enhanced by its generous employee benefits and annual recognition ceremonies.

4P4, S. MCC offers several orientation sessions and workshops as well as opportunities for lunch/breakfast with the President and other top administrators. The segmented design of the orientation programs provides MCC with an opportunity to evaluate and assess the effectiveness of the programs in meeting its employees' needs.

4P5, O. A consultant performed an analysis of employee classification and compensation, which led to a new pay grade system that assisted the personnel in charge. While it is noted that MCC worked with Enterprise Resources Planning (ERP) to address succession planning, no copies of the dashboards mentioned are found in the portfolio, and there is no indication of how these dashboards are determined and how they are used.

4P6, O. MCC employs four activities that contribute to organizational productivity and employee satisfaction. However, it is not clear how MCC approaches the overall design of work processes to ensure productivity and satisfaction.

4 P7, S. McHenry has added two ethics policies affecting employees. It has in place a clear process for informing employees of expectations for ethical practices. Safe reporting structures are in place for all employees.

4P8, O. While MCC provides evidence that it sees professional development as strategic and necessary, it is unclear how training needs are determined and there is no evidence that any processes are in place to prioritize and budget for professional development. MCC reports that a survey of its adjunct faculty resulted in a very successful orientation program. Emulating this with other employee groups may assist the institution with its long-term employee development programs.

4P9-10, S. MCC is engaged in implementing its 2012–2015 Professional Development Strategic Plan. It appears committed both culturally and operationally to the ongoing professional training and development of its workforce. A new evaluation tool and process for evaluation was developed with the analysis of a cross-departmental AQIP Action Team in 2011

4P12, S. MCC used recent PACE results to identify opportunities for improvement relative to the motivation of faculty, staff, and administrators and to inform specific strategies. By using the nationally normed PACE instrument to evaluate the campus climate, the institution is able to effectively identify areas needing attention and those areas that are performing desirable. Use of data such as the PACE to intentionally inform specific strategies designed to improve PACE results, demonstrates a commitment to continuous improvement and use of data to inform decisions.

4R2-3, O. While a number of examples are listed, it is not clear what some of the results imply. For example, minimal data is presented in 4R2 and 4R3, and what is shown does not appear to have relevance to the category of valuing people. It may be beneficial for MCC to develop a more comprehensive data collection and analysis procedure.

4R4, O. The PACE Climate survey indicates that MCC falls somewhat below the national norm in all five categories measured. A survey asking "the extent to which professional development and training opportunities are available" was re-administered and MCC was rated 3.83 compared to a national average of 3.50. While MCC compares

favorably in the results, MCC may want to consider how it uses comparison results to identify improvement projects.

4I1, S. MCC has been responsive to data results for Valuing People. AQIP helped MCC implement certain activities in this area to achieve a deeper cultural shift and to build an effective infrastructure in which it continues to improve its means of valuing people by collecting data and then, based on an analysis of those data, target specific processes for change.

4I2, S. Strategic planning and a number of initiatives help set targets for improved performance, development opportunities, best practices, and planning for effectiveness and success.

AQIP Category 5: Leading and Communicating. This category addresses how the institution's leadership and communication structures, networks, and processes guide planning, decision-making, seeking future opportunities, and building and sustaining a learning environment. It examines the institution's processes and systems related to leading activities, communicating activities, alignment of leadership system practices, institutional values and expectations, direction-setting, use of data, analysis of results, leadership development and sharing, succession planning, and efforts to continuously improve these areas. The Systems Appraisal Team identified various strengths and opportunities for **McHenry Community College** for Category 5.

McHenry utilizes a collaborative, team-based decision-making system. MCC's processes for leading and communicating are aligned with the mission and include informal and formal mechanisms for communicating and deploying MCC's mission. MCC has established goals, benchmarks, metrics and directions that are intended to help move the institution forward utilizing a collaborative, team-based decision-making system. MCC can benefit from data that would assist in assessing the effectiveness of leading and communicating.

5P1, S. MCC utilized a systematic process for reviewing and modifying its mission and values that included strategic planning, environmental scan, and broad representation of faculty, adjunct faculty, staff, and administrators. The establishment of a new mission statement that is simple and focused, "Our focus is learning. Student success is our goal," establishes a strong foundation from which MCC can move forward.

5P2, S. The strategic direction of MCC is set by leadership, through the use of committees, AQIP Action teams, and departmental input. The overall direction in the

alignment of mission, vision, and values is set by the strategic planning process; which is reviewed annually. The strategic plan is ultimately aligned with MCC budgeting process.

5P3, O. While MCC has several formal and informal mechanisms for seeking the needs and expectations of current and potential students, along with key stakeholder groups, it is not clear how the institution uses the information and data collected in a systematic process designed to respond to the needs and expectations of stakeholders. For example, MCC notes that data collected includes areas marked as strengths and those requiring improvements, but it is not clear when and how this identification takes place or what actions result from the identification. Establishing a regular process for review of this data and information to determine and develop actions may assist MCC with demonstrating a commitment to continuous quality improvement.

5P5, S. MCC utilizes a collaborative, team-based decision-making system throughout all levels of the institution, with decision-making processes being stratified into three categories – strategic/governing, operational, and daily business. MCC also utilizes instructionally focused committees, along with curriculum and academic policies, which provide faculty input on academic matters.

5P6, O. While MCC lists several aspects of its decision making structure, and describes the functioning of some of these processes, it is not clear how MCC uses its data in the decision-making processes. While KPIs are mentioned throughout the portfolio, it is not clear what the KPIs are or how they are used in the decision making process. Establishing a regular process to monitor KPI's, along with other performance measures, may assist the institution with its commitment to continuous quality improvement.

5P8, O. While MCC has established a number of communications channels to communicate information and plans, it is unclear whether these channels are utilized to reinforce characteristics of high performance institutions, such as modeling the use of data in decision-making. MCC has an opportunity to more intentionally utilize institutional structures and processes to deepen and reinforce a shared mission, vision, and values.

5R1-3, OO. While MCC collects and analyzes a variety of data, purportedly as performance measures of leading and communicating it is unclear whether these measures are appropriate for leading and communicating. Additionally, MCC notes sixteen measures (Figure 5.5) for Leading and Communicating, but limited results are shown. For example, MCC notes that it used the MAP survey in 2009 and 2011 to

measure an aspect of Leading and Communicating; however, the MAP is not shown as a measure in Figure 5.5. Also, the establishment of multiple AQIP projects from the survey is a positive step in MCC's journey, but it is unclear what results were used to generate these projects. Without clearly identified measures, trended and compared to targets, MCC may struggle with systematically identifying areas where performance is desirable or needs improvement. In reference to benchmarking (5R3), while MCC is comparing its performance results to other higher education institutions using the PACE survey, MCC has an opportunity to move analysis of these results from retrospective (explanation of why the results are what they are) to prospective (what will institution do about it).

5I1-2, S. MCC has made a number of improvements using AQIP projects since 2009. The utilization of a 2011 PACE survey item result as an opportunity for improvement and subsequent intentional improvements in the area is a shining example of using data to drive decision-making in the spirit of continuous improvement.

AQIP Category 6: Supporting Institutional Operations. This category addresses the variety of institutional support processes that help to provide an environment in which learning can thrive. It examines the institution's processes and systems related to student support, administrative support, identification of needs, contribution to student learning and accomplishing other distinctive objectives, day-to-day operations, use of data, measures, analysis of results, and efforts to continuously improve these areas. The Systems Appraisal Team identified various strengths and opportunities for **McHenry Community College** for Category 6.

MCC has developed a process to create Key Performance Indicators (KPI's), which help align budget planning, the Education Master Planning, Employee Development Plans, and other initiatives with related to the Strategic Plan of the organization. However, the results do not appear to address issues, processes, and needs related to institutional operations. Additionally, many of the areas are disconnected. Disconnects appear to exist between data collected and associated plans and processes. MCC has an opportunity to tie these processes and assessments into a comprehensive improvement plan with clear goals, analysis of results, and improvements more closely tied to data analysis. MCC might extend institutional effort and success related to measurement of student performance to include all institutional operations.

6P1, O. While MCC has several processes designed at various data evaluation frequencies to identify the support service needs of students and key stakeholder groups, it is not clear how MCC uses data and information at the overall institutional level to identify overall key needs to inform overall planning. Because so many of the processes collect data and information at varying frequencies, the processes appear reactive and may impede the ability of MCC to holistically determine effective service needs and those needing improvement. Establishing a method to effectively link the various service and program level services to the overall institutional plan may assist MCC with being able to identify the over-reaching support needs of students and stakeholders.

6P3, S. In conjunction with the Board of Trustees, MCC has proactively assessed its needs in the area of campus safety. Based on the findings of various studies, including an Active Shooter Drill, MCC has made process improvements in its safety procedures. This includes the creation of an on-campus Police Force. Additionally, all new employees go through significant safety training on their first day, and within their first month of employment.

6P4 O. While McHenry College identifies the Program Review Process for long-term improvements, it is not evident how MCC identifies the day-to-day overseeing of key student, administrative and institutional support service processes. It may be beneficial for MCC to identify and implement more short-term processes in the areas of support.

6P5, O. While MCC has established a process for sharing AQIP Action Project reports via the myMCC Portal, it is not clear how knowledge sharing, innovation, and empowerment is encouraged and supported through a systematic process beyond the Action Projects. Establishing a method to encourage innovation, knowledge sharing, and empowerment for all employees such as learning from professional development activities may assist MCC with supporting involvement of the entire workforce with learning and continuous improvement opportunities. Additionally, the description given indicates how AQIP Action Projects are done, but does not specifically address how support processes are deployed.

6R1-5 OO. MCC has noted eighteen measures of student, administrative, and institutional support service process collected and administered by various departments at various frequencies. The lack of consistent frequency of measurement may inhibit the institution's ability to effectively evaluate performance in a systematic and holistic

manner. Further, it is not clear how the data shown in the results categories relate to improvement in this category. The data show retention of various student demographics, but it is not clear how these data are analyzed and used for improvement of any student, faculty, and administrative support processes. Establishing high-level key measures of performance collected and analyzed in a systematic, collective, and regular manner may enable the institution to evaluate overall performance to inform process improvements.

6R3, S. Administrative support service performance results are regularly monitored and recorded. McHenry Community College has been issued an unqualified audit opinion for 15 consecutive years. Bookstore operations compare favorably nationally to those of similar size and scope. Information Technology provides support and assistance through a call center. The Police Department reports regularly on crime statistics and the number of offenses is on the decrease for the past four years.

6I1, S. Committed to a culture of continuous quality improvement, MCC has implemented changes to support organizational operations. Significant recent improvements in Supporting Organizational Operations in the student support services areas that appear comprehensive and reflect the institution's short- and long-term goals are listed as the result of AQIP projects.

6I2, S. All employees have the opportunity to recommend action projects. Many of these recommendations focus on improving support services. In 2010, there was a shift to make the continuous improvement process more strategic.

AQIP Category 7: Measuring Effectiveness. This category examines how the institution collects, analyzes, and uses information to manage itself and to drive performance improvement. It examines the institution's processes and systems related to collection, storage, management, and use of information and data both at the institutional and departmental/unit levels. It considers institutional measures of effectiveness; information and data alignment with institutional needs and directions; comparative information and data; analysis of information and data; effectiveness of information system and processes; measures; analysis of results; and efforts to continuously improve these areas. The Systems Appraisal Team identified various strengths and opportunities for **McHenry Community College** for Category 7.

MCC utilizes institution-wide planning and benchmarking to establish clear directions and goals. MCC focuses on three areas of accountability: state, federal and accreditation reporting requirements. MCC is engaged in multiple levels and methods for institutional planning and

collects and distributes an extensive amount of data and information at various cycles but the specific key performance indicators, peer group analyses, and improvement goals linked to analysis are fragmented and asystematic.

7P1-2, OO. While MCC conducted a SWOT analysis in 2012, and identifies three priorities that guide continuous improvement efforts, it is not clear that a process exists to select, manage, and distribute the data. MCC discusses the mechanisms that drive these processes, and give examples of data collected; however, there is no information given on what the processes are. It may prove beneficial for MCC to clarify or create explicit processes by with data on overall institutional performance is selected, managed, analyzed, and made available.

7P3, S. Department and unit metrics derived from the Strategic Plan guide data need and collection. The Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system is an efficient data-request and retrieval process that operates across all segments of MCC. Each department, in conjunction with the Office of Institutional Research, is required to develop a specific set of annual metrics. Departments and units have electronic means for obtaining information which is available on the employee portal. In addition, employees can access system data through the new Enterprise Resource Planning system.

7P4-5, OO. It is not clear how the institution analyzes data at the institutional level regarding overall performance, as well as benchmarking. While there are numerous reports listed, these reports appear to address data needed for other categories, not Category 7. There is no specific process evident as to how MCC determines data collection needs pertaining to overall performance and benchmarking. The reports listed do not appear to be connected to the process of measurement systems. MCC may benefit from establishing an overall process for identifying, collecting, and analyzing the process of data collection and performance. Without such a process the ability to fully understand and evaluate data collection systems performance may be inhibited.

7P7, O. MCC preserves the security of its information systems with internal and external safeguards, with several steps being identified to safeguard data. However, it is not clear from the portfolio if the process is succinct and maturing with specific security issues; nor is it clear how MCC ensures the availability of its data.

7R1-3, OO. While MCC reports multiple measures, it is not clear how these measures

address the category questions. The portfolio questions reference data collected and analyzed pertaining to the data collection, storage, and reporting systems (i.e. Information Technology processes). The data provided by MCC are results of individual measures of performance for other categories, and do not appear to pertain to the data collection and performance processes of MCC. It is not evident that MCC collects and analyzes any data pertaining to their data systems.

7I1-2, OO. It is not evident how the institution uses the results from measuring effectiveness to direct improvements or how performance results are used in a systematic and comprehensive method. For example, the institution notes the implementation of a new ERP system as an improvement, it is not clear how or what performance results were used to identify that the new ERP system was needed, or that it is now effective. Establishing a systematic process to use data from, the data collection system, to identify gaps in performance and to inform improvements may assist MCC with gaining a full understanding of how well its processes for measuring effectiveness are operating.

AQIP Category 8: Planning Continuous Improvement. This category examines the institution's planning processes and how strategies and action plans are helping to achieve the institution's mission and vision. It examines coordination and alignment of strategies and action plans; measures and performance projections; resource needs; faculty, staff, and administrator capabilities; analysis of performance projections and results; and efforts to continuously improve these areas. The Systems Appraisal Team identified various strengths and opportunities for **McHenry Community College** for Category 8.

The College has made some progress in maturity relative to planning for continuous improvement through the development of the strategic and other master plans. However, a significant opportunity still exists to identify key measures of institutional performance to enable the College to gain an understanding of how the plans are impacting institutional performance in relation to desired targets and for comparison.

8P1, S. MCC has developed a comprehensive strategic planning process, complete with strategic plan, a fiscal plan, a campus construction plan, a facility master plan, and educational master plan, and a technology master plan. As MCC continues with its planning processes, it may want to consider establishing methods to integrate and link plans systematically to ensure that they are feasible and complementary.

8P3, S. MCC's process for alignment of department goals with the five strategic initiatives and goals which are reviewed by senior leaders provides MCC with a systematic method of ensuring linkages between departmental actions and institutional desired outcomes.

8P5, O. While MCC has goals and tactics outlined in plans, it is not clear how the institution selects measures of performance and sets targets for performance. For example, it is not clear how the "tactics" noted in goal 2.2 of the Institutional Effectiveness plan will be measured. While there are metrics noted, it is not clear if the metrics are used to evaluate achievement of goal 2.2 or the tactics, nor is it clear how the metrics were determined. Establishing a clear process for determine performance measures and desired targets may assist the institution with demonstrating alignment and linkages between objectives, actions, and outcomes.

8P7, O. While MCC lists numerous activities designed to address various different types of risks, it is not clear how these activities are aligned with planning process steps. For example, it is not clear how the Innovation in Teaching Grants link to overall planning processes to assess and address risks in planning. MCC may benefit from establishing a few key methods to deploy within planning process to address risk at the institutional level.

8P8, S. Through continuing professional development of all employees, MCC ensures the development of employee capabilities to address changing requirements arising from organizational strategies and action plans. MCC has a Professional Development team that specializes in training and the Professional Development Strategic Plan identifies objectives to be met in these training efforts.

8R2, O. The performance results shown for planning continuous improvement represent, in some instances, a one-time completed task such as a "completed environmental scan" while others are vague outcomes that may be difficult to quantitatively measure such as "strong collaborative efforts."   Without a full understanding of how the organization is performing in a quantitative method, it will be difficult to understand if the strategic plan strategies are moving the institution in the desired direction. MCC may benefit from establishing and/or using quantitative measure of performance that can be tracked, trended over time, and compared with peers such as some of the measures noted in 8R1.

8R3, OO. While some examples of strategic plan initiatives are shown, overall performance results, targets and projections for strategies and actions are not provided. Without targets, MCC's ability to assess institutional improvement may be limited.

8R4, OO. Comparative results are not provided. MCC may benefit from establishing measures of performance that can be compared, especially since this was identified as an opportunity for improvement in the last systems appraisal feedback report.

8R5, OO. There is no evidence that MCC measures or evaluates its process for Planning Continuous Improvement. A significant opportunity exists to establish a method of evaluating process to understand and demonstrate the effectiveness of the strategic plans and related processes in achieving institutional desired goals.

AQIP Category 9: Building Collaborative Relationships. This category examines the institution's relationships – current and potential – to analyze how they contribute to the institution accomplishing its mission. It examines the institution's processes and systems related to identification of key internal and external collaborative relationships; alignment of key collaborative relationships; relationship creation, prioritization, and building; needs identification; internal relationships; measures; analysis of results; and efforts to continuously improve these areas. The Systems Appraisal Team identified various strengths and opportunities for **McHenry Community College** for Category 9.

Key external stakeholders include: the regions school districts, area industry and businesses, centers for economic development, four-year universities, and maturing adults. MCC has clearly identified its major external stakeholders, and appears to have working strong relationships with them developed through a variety of departments and methods. MCC may benefit from systematic, integrated processes for determining these relationships, and in working with them to advance college strategic goals. As MCC continues its quality journey, increased focus on planned outreach, measurement of the quality and results of collaborative activity, and establishment of more focused comparisons on collaborative relationships may prove useful.

9P1, O. While MCC has multiple activities for building relationships with educational institutions and other organizations, it is not clear what process is used to create and prioritize relationship-building activities. Establishing a process to create and prioritize activities may assist MCC with the ability to measure and understand which activities are effective for relationship building and which activities are less effective.

9P3, O. It is not clear how MCC determines and prioritizes which services to outsource and which services to keep in order to build relationships that enhance services to students. Establishing a process to measure effectiveness of outsourced and in-house services may assist MCC with identifying those services most effective and may assist with prioritizing which services are most important for determining whether services are outsourced or kept in-house.

9P5, S. MCC prioritizes and creates relationships with education associations, external agencies, partners, and community by aligning relationships with MCC's goals and potential value added through contributing to the mission of the institution. For example, the community forums are used to connect with all areas of the county served. Through these forums, MCC is able to support its strategic vision to "be the community's first choice for a lifetime of learning."

9P7, O. While MCC has used the AQIP process and college-wide events have created an environment of collaboration, it is not clear what systematic on-going process is in place to consistently create and build relationships between and among departments. For example, MCC lists many examples of activities such as the creation of a new developmental English course by two departments working collectively; however, it is not described if this improvement was part of an overall process that occurs regularly. Without linking activities to systematic methods, MCC may find itself in reactive mode rather than proactive.

9R1-3, OO. Results for some measures of building collaborative relationships listed are not shown. For example, MCC notes that top "transfer destinations" is a measure of building relationships; however, results for "transfer destinations" are not provided. MCC may benefit from establishing key measures of building collaborative relationships that can be tracked, trended over time, and compared with peers to more effectively understand how well relationship building activities are in achieving the mission of student success.

9I1-2, OO. MCC has an opportunity to intentionally link key performance measures and results for building relationships to how it choses and determines activities to implement or activities to discontinue. Without having an understanding of how well activities designed to build relationships are performing, the institution may continue to struggle with being in reactive mode rather than in a true continuous quality improvement method of operating.

Accreditation Evidence McHenry Community College

The following section identifies any areas in the judgment of the Systems Appraisal Team where the institution either has not provided sufficient evidence that it currently meets the Commission's Criteria for Accreditation and Core Components, or that it may face difficulty in meeting the Criteria and Core Components in the future. Identification of any such deficiencies as part of the Systems Appraisal process affords the institution the opportunity to remedy the problem prior to Reaffirmation of Accreditation.

Criterion 1: Evidence found in the Systems Portfolio	Core Component				
	1A	1B	1C	1D	
Strong, clear, and well presented.		x		x	
Adequate but could be improved.	x		x		
Unclear or incomplete.					
Criterion 2: Evidence found in the Systems Portfolio	Core Component				
	2A	2B	2C	2D	2E
Strong, clear, and well presented.	x				x
Adequate but could be improved.		x			
Unclear or incomplete.			x	x	

Criterion 3: Evidence found in the Systems Portfolio	Core Component				
	3A	3B	3C	3D	3E
Strong, clear, and well presented.	x	x	x		
Adequate but could be improved.				x	x
Unclear or incomplete.					
Criterion 4: Evidence found in the Systems Portfolio	Core Component				
	4A	4B	4C		
Strong, clear, and well presented.					
Adequate but could be improved.	x		x		
Unclear or incomplete.		x			
Criterion 5: Evidence found in the Systems Portfolio	Core Component				
	5A	5B	5C	5D	

Strong, clear, and well presented.	x				
Adequate but could be improved.		x	x	x	
Unclear or incomplete.					

1.A   *The institution's mission is broadly understood within the institution and guides its operations* (5P1 & 5P2).

Adequate but could be improved

- The mission statement is developed through a process suited to the nature and culture of the institution and is adopted by the governing board.

- The institution's academic programs, student support services, and enrollment profile are consistent with its stated mission.

- The institution's planning and budgeting priorities align with and support the mission.

1.B. *The mission is articulated publicly* (5P3 & 5P8).

Strong, clear, and well presented.

- MCC has completed a process of strategic planning for five years that assures alignment of objectives with the mission and its principles, values and efforts to help students learn.

- In 2012, the institution finalized a new mission statement following a comprehensive College process. It simply states "Our focus is learning. Student success is our goal." This single focus is the foundation for planning (including the development of the new strategic plan) and all aspects of the college key planning efforts, experiences and goals.

1.C.   *The institution understands the relationship between its mission and the diversity of society* (1P4 & 1P10).

Adequate but could be improved.

- The Institutional Overview states that the district is 77% rural and 23% suburban in nature. While it is noted in 1P4 that the county has an increasingly diverse population, no statistics are presented.

- Following an "extensive Environmental Scan," MCC reviewed its diversity alignment activities. Subsequently, its diversity efforts include: partnerships with diverse school

districts, the creation of an Office of Multicultural Affairs, and an "expanded focus" on the MCC Foundations of excellence self-study by the Diversity Committee.

- MCC has programs in place that serve students with disabilities, diverse students and veterans of the armed services. It evaluates reading, writing and math skills for courses that do not require placement testing or have prerequisites.

1.D.   *The institution's mission demonstrates commitment to the public good* (3P3 & 3P5).

Strong, clear, and well presented.

- The College's new mission statement, "Our focus is learning. Student success is our goal," was developed with "simplicity in mind and a goal of resonating with the College's constituents and residents county-wide."

- The results from the Environmental Scan help MCC make informed decisions with a focus on community economics, demographics, and educational and workforce trends.

- MCC is a publicly supported institution and does not generate financial returns for any external entity.

- This is demonstrated through both the new mission statement and the new strategic plan.

- MCC used both internally generated and external data (Environmental Scan) to engage with its identified external constituencies. The college appears to be very responsive to the communities' needs.

2.A.   *The institution operates with integrity in its financial, academic, personnel, and auxiliary functions; it establishes and follows fair and ethical policies and processes for its governing board, administration, faculty, and* staff (4P7).

Strong, clear, and well presented

- The College has added an Ethics Ordinance Policy. The Ethics Ordinance Policy focuses on political activity of employees and the solicitation and acceptance of gifts.

- The Whistleblower Policy protects employees against retaliation when reporting internal wrongdoing.

- Through a third-party ethics hotline, EthicsPoint, employees can report complaints regarding unethical behavior or action.

- Confidential Information Training including technology use is required of all new hires prior to gaining access to the College's computer network. Training is updated as needed (at least annually), and all employees are required to successfully complete the training online every two years.

- Annual financial audits using third party auditors include random interviews of key employees to identify possible unethical or fraudulent practices.

2.B.   *The institution presents itself clearly and completely to its students and to the public with regard to its programs, requirements, faculty and staff, costs to students, control, and accreditation relationships (1P6).*

Adequate but could be improved

- MCC presents itself clearly through multiple means, including the catalog and new student orientation

- The college catalog, degree and certificate guide sheets, and course schedules outline required prerequisites.

2.C.   *The governing board of the institution is sufficiently autonomous to make decisions in the best interest of the institution and to assure its integrity* (5P2)*.*

Unclear or incomplete

- There is no evidence that delineates the autonomous nature of the Board of Trustees in institutional governance.

- The Board of Trustees adopted the college mission, strategic, facilities, and other plans. The Board of Trustees reexamined the College's mission statement and values in preparation for the 2013-2018 strategic planning process. The consensus was to develop a mission statement that was clear, with a simple and unifying focus of "why we exist." The revised mission statement was adopted in July 2012: Our Focus is Learning, Student Success is Our Goal (Category 8 Overview).

- In October 2010, the Board of Trustees authorized the implementation of a police department with both sworn and non-sworn officers (6P3).

- The Board of Trustees reviewed, accepted, and approved implementation of a Classification and Compensation Analysis completed through an AQIP Team and external consultant (4P11).

2.D.   *The institution is committed to freedom of expression and the pursuit of truth in teaching and learning* (1P1).

Unclear or incomplete

- Beyond various statements that they support academic freedom and creation of an AQIP Action Team defining Excellence in Teaching, little evidence is presented that a defined process exists to support these claims.

2.E.   *The institution ensures that faculty, students, and staff acquire, discover, and apply knowledge responsibly* (4P7 and 1P11).

Strong, clear, and well presented.

- The College has added an Ethics Ordinance Policy. The Ethics Ordinance Policy focuses on political activity of employees and the solicitation and acceptance of gifts.

- Confidential Information Training including technology use is required of all new hires prior to gaining access to the College's computer network. Training is updated as needed (at least annually), and all employees are required to successfully complete the training online every two years.

- Academic integrity and honesty in all educational classrooms and programs are critical in providing this high level of education. Faculty, staff, and students are expected to be to be honest and ethical in their academic work. MCC strives to provide the College community with the knowledge, skills, judgment and wisdom they need to function in society as educated adults. To falsify or fabricate the results of one's research; to present the words, ideas, data or work of another as one's own; or to cheat on an examination corrupts the essential process of higher education.

- In accordance with this philosophy and Chapter 10, Act 5 of the 1994 Illinois Community College Act, academic dishonesty in any form, including cheating, plagiarism and all other acts of academic theft, is considered intolerable. Authorized College personnel will not hesitate to impose appropriate sanctions up to and including suspension from MCC.

3.A.   *The institution's degree programs are appropriate to higher education* (1P4 & 1P12).

Strong, clear, and well presented.

- There does not appear to be a connection between the institutions processes and activities and diversity efforts. Additionally, the college seems to only define diversity through race and country of origin.

- The College offers seven associate's degrees and over 50 professional certificate programs. All programs are approved through the Illinois Community College Board (ICCB).

3.B. *The institution demonstrates that the exercise of intellectual inquiry and the acquisition, application, and integration of broad learning and skills are integral to its educational programs (1P1 & 1P2).*

Strong, clear, and well presented.

- The College strives to provide a learning environment that "fosters a wide array of enrichment activities to drive excellence through the transformation of students' professional and personal lives."

- MCC general education is advanced through a common core of curriculum and distribution requirements, and its goals are rooted in the College's mission to focus on learning with a goal of student success.

- The general education program is intended to provide students with skills to demonstrate competencies in five key areas. Thus, "the College is able to share common knowledge, intellectual concepts and attitudes that are critical in a student's further success."

3.C. *The institution has the faculty and staff needed for effective, high-quality programs and student services* (4P2 & 4P10).

Strong, clear, and well presented.

- MCC has a systematic and comprehensive search process that includes questions regarding diversity, technology, and the ability to perform the duties and responsibilities of the role.

- All faculty and staff undergo regular comprehensive performance evaluations that are aligned by the nature of the work (i.e. instruction, non-instructional activity).

- Qualifications are consistent with ICCB requirements. Nearly 91% of faculty hold a master's or doctorate degree; 68% of adjunct faculty hold a master's or doctorate degree. Nearly 65% of administrators hold a master's or doctorate degree.

3.D. *The institution provides support for student learning and effective teaching* (1P7 & 1P15)*.*

Adequate but could be improved.

- High school visits, career exploration courses, referrals, Freshman Seminar, and course advising are all ways the College helps students select programs of study that match their needs, interests, and abilities. Students take interest inventories and meet with the Career Counselor to discuss the results.

- Faculty and staff advisors provide students with insights to their chosen majors and discuss the choice based upon the student academic ability and perceptions.

- The college provides support for student learning through the MCC101 College Experience course. Additional career choice assistance is made through counseling services and career exploration courses taught in high schools. Learning support is provided through college readiness courses, student counseling when on academic warning, and free tutoring services.

3.E. *The institution fulfills the claims it makes for an enriched educational environment* (1P16)*.*

Adequate but could be improved.

- MCC students are encouraged to participate in service and citizenship learning through student government and clubs. An example is the Student life department that provides student-centered programs, services and opportunities and fosters an engaged student community.

- MCC offers and encourages engagement in a wide array of extracurricular activities that support the development of leadership and interpersonal skills.

4.A. *The institution demonstrates responsibility for the quality of its educational programs* (1P4 & 1P13).

Adequate but could be improved.

- The college appears to have a program review process in place that works to determine that programs are current.

- Assessment of specific course outcomes that are linked to specific program outcomes would provide more robust information about student levels of performance.

- Aside from information about broad competencies, there is little in the portfolio to understand how course and program outcomes are linked and/or differentiated across different levels of study.

- The college has a process in place to review and improve new programs

- The college uses data from an environmental scan to identify course competencies, assessment needs, and programs that meet student needs.

- McHenry College has a process in place to review all programs every 5 years. This helps to ensure that programs meet the needs of students and employers.

4.B. *The institution demonstrates a commitment to educational achievement and improvement through ongoing assessment of student learning* (1P2 & 1P18).

Unclear or Incomplete

- There is no evidence that the institution has set measurable goals for student learning.

- There is no evidence for meaningful assessment other than some use of standardized testing.

4.C. *The institution demonstrates a commitment to educational improvement through ongoing attention to retention, persistence, and completion rates in its degree and certificate programs* (3P1)*.*

Adequate but could be improved.

- While MCC lists definitions and clearly pays attention to retention, persistence, and completion, there is no evidence that target goals are set.

- Since there are no actual targets given, it is difficult to see how MCC uses the data for improvement. However, the college is clearly comparing itself to a national cohort.

- It is clear that the college is collecting and using standardized data, but the process for collection is not indicated in the portfolio.

5.A. *The institution's resource base supports its current educational programs and its plans for maintaining and strengthening their quality in the future* (8P6)*.*

Strong, clear, and well presented.

- The College aligns annual budget assumptions and needs with strategic priorities and strategic master plans. Needs and resources are balanced to ensure continued fiscal health as monitored by the College's five-year Composite Financial Index (CFI) score.

- The College uses the master plans to plan for and support fiscal, human, physical, and technology infrastructures.

5.**B.**   *The institution's governance and administrative structures promote effective leadership and support collaborative processes that enable the institution to fulfill its mission* (5P5 & 5P9)*.*

Adequate but could be improved

- MCC utilizes a collaborate, team-based decision-making system throughout all levels of the institution. Operational decisions are typically made by divisions, departments and cross-functional teams with involvement/input from senior leadership. The development of curriculum and related academic policies and procedures is a shared responsibility of faculty and administration.

- The Board of Trustees and the Executive Council make strategic/governing decisions with input from appropriate areas. The Board holds monthly meetings open to all employees and the public. The President sends emails with updates from the monthly meetings to all employees.

5.C.   *The institution engages in systematic and integrated planning* (5P2 & 5P6).

Adequate but could be improved.

- The leadership at the College set direction through a team based decision-making system within the entire college.

- This decision making process is stratified into three categories – strategic/governing, operational, and daily business and considers the mission of the success of student learning.

- A collaborative team based decision-making system embodies both internal and external constituents as faculty, administrators, departments, and advising committees.

5.D.   *The institution works systematically to improve its performance* (7P2 & 7P4)*.*

Adequate but could be improved.

- In 2012, MCC conducted an Environmental Scan and SWOT Analysis to obtain the data necessary for the strategic planning process. The Environmental Scan and the SWOT Analysis provided a global overview and vision for the future direction and needs of the county and its residents.

- MCC's benchmarking comparisons currently include ICCB, NCCBP, Noel-Levitz, and CCSSE. Results are summarized and distributed broadly.

- MCC's comprehensive Strategic Plan drives all the other planning efforts across the campus, promoting targeted continuous improvement from the top—with an institutional focus on quality, being change-ready, and creating a community of learners. The College demonstrates institutional support for AQIP by budgeting $50,000 annually for action teams to use as start-up funds. In addition, Action Teams are still required to use Gantt charts to plan and track progress and use the Deming cycle of improvement to collect and analyze data to make and implement recommendations (8P3.)

Quality of Systems Portfolio For McHenry Community College

Because it stands as a reflection of the institution, the *Systems Portfolio* should be complete and coherent, and it should provide an open and honest self-analysis on the strengths and challenges facing the organization. In this section, the Systems Appraisal Team provides McHenry Community College with constructive feedback on the overall quality of the portfolio, along with suggestions for improvement of future portfolio submissions.

The MCC Review Team recommends several considerations for future portfolios that will aid in the review process and overall quality of the Systems Portfolio.

One area for future consideration would be for MCC to consider more clearly defining processes to include specific steps involved, data and information used, frequency, and responsibility. The institution provides many lists of activities and actions taken, but without a description of how those activities and actions were determined through a systematic process that is well ordered, repeatable, and exhibiting the use of data and information to make decisions, the College is unable to demonstrate the linkage between process and derived outcomes. Throughout the portfolio, processes are described using the lists or with single examples which appear reactive in nature rather than systematic and mature. The College may benefit from including process diagrams and/or flow charts for more complicated processes that will enable the College to

more clearly articulate key process steps, data and information used, frequency, and responsibility.

Another area for consideration would be to determine key results for processes. The College includes many lists of measures for the results, but often the results for those measures were not included in the portfolio's results sections. The presentation of data and performance results are another area for improvement. Clearly articulating measures of performance in the first results question followed by consistent charts that show baseline, trend, comparative, and targeted results would greatly enhance the College's ability to demonstrate a commitment to measuring performance.

Throughout the portfolio, the College references KPIs; however, it is not clear or shown in the portfolio what the KPIs actually are for the College. The College may benefit from clearly describing the KPIs, how they were determined, who determined them, how they are used in processes, and how they inform decisions and improvements.

Another area for consideration would be to include specific examples of how quantitative results are used to inform an improvement initiative or process. Providing examples of how results are used in the decision making process could enhance the College's ability to demonstrate and illustrate a culture and infrastructure of continuous improvement and institutional effectiveness.

One final suggestion would be to consider an approach of preparing the portfolio that coordinates writing efforts across the categories for consistency and clarity of processes. Since much of the writing for a Systems Portfolio is technical in nature requiring clear descriptions of processes that link to intentional outcomes and results, the College may benefit from a single editor that can assist with consistency and continuity in language and to ensure questions are fully answered and numbered correctly.

Using the Feedback Report

The AQIP Systems Appraisal process is intended to initiate action for institutional improvement. Though decisions about specific actions rest with each institution, the Commission expects every institution to use its feedback to stimulate cycles of continual improvement and to inform future AQIP processes.

Some key questions that may arise in careful examination of this report may include: How do the team's findings challenge our assumptions about ourselves? Given our mission and goals, which issues should we focus on? How will we employ results to innovate, grow, and encourage

a positive culture of improvement? How will we incorporate lessons learned from this review in our planning and operational processes? How will we revise the *Systems Portfolio* to reflect what we have learned? How an organization interprets, communicates, and uses its feedback for improvement ought to support AQIP's core values, encouraging involvement, learning, collaboration, and integrity.

The Commission's goal is to help an institution clarify the strategic issues most vital to its success, and then to support the institution as it addresses these priorities in ways that will make a difference in institutional performance.